

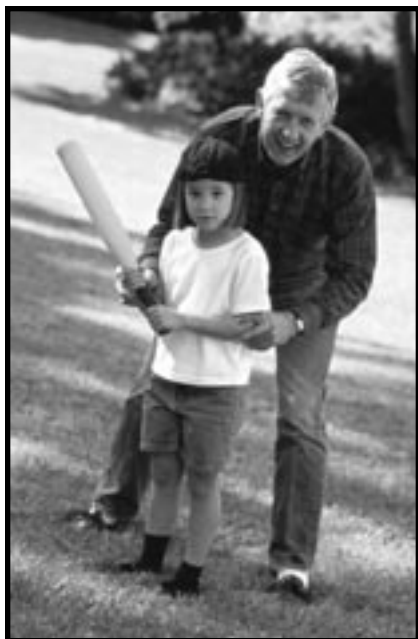


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# Parent Handbook:

## Early Physical Development, Health and Safety

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ■ Early Childhood Section



## Introduction

**P**lease join us in helping your child get off to the best possible start in life by guiding his physical development and teaching him about health and safety. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Preschool-age children love to imitate adults. You teach your child both by your own behavior and by telling him what you want him to learn.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, along with a broad-based group of individuals whose backgrounds are representative of the early childhood community in Missouri, developed a set of standards of what most children should know and be able to do by the time they enter kindergarten. The standards are intended to be used in a variety of early childhood settings by a variety of people: parents, Parents as Teachers parent educators, child care providers, Head Start and public/private school teachers, etc. They are consistent with current research and recommendations from other state and national initiatives.

Not all children learn at the same rate. Just as we recognize that adults are individually different, we also recognize that variability in children is normal. The standards are not intended to be used to determine if a child is "ready" to enter kindergarten but are goals for adults to use in supporting the development of preschool children.

Helping your child achieve optimal physical development, health and safety contribute to school readiness in all areas. Current research confirms that movement and sensory experiences during the early years of life are critical for healthy brain development. In addition, physical activity has been shown to reduce stress. Excess stress can negatively affect learning and memory, so it is important to teach your child healthy ways to manage it.

Physical development includes large-muscle (gross motor) and small-muscle (fine motor) movements as well as the unconscious ability to organize both types of movements in response to sensory input. Large-muscle movements include such skills as running, jumping and climbing. Small-muscle movements are those used in abilities such as drawing, cutting and tying. Your child needs many opportunities to exercise both types of muscles in order to develop body competence, control and coordination.

The fundamental movement patterns formed during the preschool years are the foundation for more complex skills needed in elementary school. Running and jumping are prerequisites for sport, dance and exercise activities. Squeezing play dough and stringing beads build muscles and pathways in the brain for handwriting and the use of everyday tools and equipment such as writing instruments, keyboards and eating utensils.

This handbook provides suggestions for helping you support your child's physical development, health and safety.

The Missouri Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education  
appreciates the cooperation of the  
Parents as Teachers National Center  
in developing this booklet.

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For additional copies of this handbook, contact the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Early Childhood Section, at (573) 751-2095 or visit the DESE Web site at [dese.mo.gov](http://dese.mo.gov). You may also contact the Parents as Teachers National Center at 1-866-PAT4YOU or 1-866-728-4968 or visit their Web site at [www.patnc.org](http://www.patnc.org).

# Physical Development, Health and Safety Standards (Goals) for the Preschool Years

**B**elow are the Standards (Goals) for Pre-K Physical Development, Health and Safety as identified by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Early Childhood Section.

## Physical development and coordination

- Uses gross motor skills with purpose and coordination.
- Uses fine motor skills with purpose and control.
- Responds to sensory input to function in the environment.

## Health

- Practices healthy behaviors.

## Safety

- Practices safe behaviors.

## Pre-K Physical Development Standards (Goals)

Physical development is the ability to use your body with increasing purpose, control and skill. Movement is essential to your child's development. She needs plenty of opportunities to learn what her body can do and to practice those skills. She should engage in planned and unplanned physical activities.

Not all children progress at the same rate. Their progress in physical development depends on many factors, including opportunities to practice, inherited skill, maturity and interest. To learn new skills, your child needs to both see the skill demonstrated and hear instructions on how to do it. With practice, her movements will become smooth, efficient and coordinated.

Physical activities are most helpful to preschoolers when they are short and simple and follow the child's interests and abilities. Young children tire easily and need to rest between times of intense activity. Enthusiasm for an activity is more important than skill level. If you or other adults put too much emphasis on skill level and competition, your child may begin to develop a negative self-image, especially if she is less coordinated or fit than others. She may even begin to avoid physical activities. If your child's early experiences with movement are successful, confidence-building and fun, she will be motivated to remain physically active throughout life.



### Standard (Goal):

### ***Uses gross motor skills with purpose and coordination.***

Motor skills are movements performed when the brain, nervous system and muscles work together. Gross motor skills are movements that use the large muscles in the arms, legs, torso and feet.

### **Look for your child to ...**

Move from  
one point to  
another.

### **Your child may ...**

Walk, run, jump, gallop and hop on one foot.

### **You can support your child ...**

Give your child plenty of opportunities to play outdoors. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education recommends at least two hours of daily outdoor play – about half of that time should be spent doing unstructured activities.

<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Move from one point to another.</p> <p><i>(continued)</i></p>	<p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Use chalk or masking tape to create straight, zigzag and wiggly lines on the ground. With your child, take turns walking along the lines. Then try running, jumping, galloping and hopping on the lines.</p> <p>Play Mother, May I? with your child. Stand about 15 feet away from her and call out directions such as: "Take five giant steps." Have your child respond by asking, "Mother, may I?" and waiting for you to say, "Yes, you may" before following the command. Continue calling out various ways of moving (e.g., three small steps, four big jumps, two hops backward) until your child reaches you. Take turns playing the mother.</p> <p>Play hopscotch with your child.</p> <p>Have a parade with your child. March around using an oatmeal box as a drum or your hands as cymbals. Take turns being the leader, and try different ways of moving (e.g., fast, slow, forward, backward, jumping, hopping, galloping, skipping).</p> <p>Lay a towel on the floor. With your child, pretend the towel is a river. Take turns jumping over the river.</p>
<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Control body movements.</p>	<p><b>Your child may ...</b></p> <p>Bend, stretch, turn and twist body parts.</p> <p>Roll her body in one direction.</p> <p>"Stop" or "freeze" then change directions while playing a game.</p> <p>Balance on one foot (on a balance beam or variety of surfaces).</p> <p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Play Simon Says, and create a variety of body motions for your child to try. Take turns being the leader.</p> <p>Play some lively music, and dance around the room with your child. Encourage your child to bend, twist, stretch and spin around.</p> <p>Work out with your child to a children's exercise video.</p> <p>Have your child help you with physical chores such as raking leaves, shoveling snow, sweeping floors and making beds.</p> <p>Have your child bend over and place both hands on the floor. While keeping her feet in place, have her "walk" her hands forward as far as possible. Then tell her to keep both hands in place while moving her feet forward as close to her hands as she can.</p> <p>Play "body bowling" with your child. Stand cardboard boxes or plastic 2-liter soda bottles in a line. Take turns lying on the floor and doing a "log roll" (or a somersault) toward the "bowling pins."</p>

<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Control body movements.</p> <p><i>(continued)</i></p>	<p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Play a game of tag with your child. Run after her, and when you tag her, have her stop, turn and chase you.</p> <p>Create a narrow path using two strips of masking tape about 6 inches apart. With your child, take turns walking along the path, both forward and backward.</p> <p>Put a dab of peanut butter on your child's knee. Have her bring her knee to her mouth and lick off the peanut butter.</p>
<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Use large-muscle movements to manipulate objects.</p>	<p><b>Your child may ...</b></p> <p>Bat at a ball or balloon with hands or equipment.</p> <p>Throw, kick, bounce and catch a ball.</p> <p>Ride a tricycle/bicycle or wheeled toy with pedals.</p> <p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Bat a latex balloon back and forth with your child. See how long you can keep the balloon in the air. Be careful – children can choke on deflated balloons.</p> <p>Roll a ball to your child to kick. Kick the ball back and forth with him.</p> <p>Set large wooden blocks or empty milk containers weighted down with sand in a line several yards apart. With your child, take turns kicking a lightweight ball around the blocks.</p> <p>With your child, throw wet sponges against an outside wall.</p> <p>Take turns tossing a rolled-up sock into a laundry basket or box.</p> <p>Draw a big circle with chalk on a basement or outdoor wall. With your child, take turns throwing a ball at the target.</p> <p>Cut the bottoms off of two plastic gallon milk containers. You and your child should each hold a container upside down by the handle. Toss a beanbag or tennis ball back and forth into the milk containers.</p> <p>Stand a couple of yards away from your child. Bounce or toss a large, soft ball (e.g., a beach ball or playground ball) to him. Have your child try to catch it and then bounce or throw it back to you. If he has difficulty, try a punch-ball balloon, which moves more slowly than a ball.</p> <p>Have your child throw a beanbag or other object up a staircase to see how far it goes.</p> <p>With your child, practice throwing paper airplanes.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for your child to ride vehicles with pedals (battery-powered riding toys do not require the same use of muscles).</p>



## Pre-K Physical Development Standards (Goals)

### Standard (Goal):

### ***Uses fine motor skills with purpose and control.***

Fine motor skills are movements that use the small muscles of the hands, fingers, toes, wrists, eyes, lips and tongue. They will help your child with handwriting, keyboarding, learning self-help skills, playing a musical instrument, using tools and speech.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Perform fine  
motor tasks.

#### **Your child may ...**

Squeeze wet sponges, a glue bottle or a catsup bottle.

Work with Play-Doh or mold clay.

Use hands and fingers to open clothespins, use staplers, use a paper punch, etc.

#### **You can support your child ...**

Provide a turkey baster or ear syringe and squirt bottles for your child to play with in a small tub of water or in the bathtub. Ask, "What happens when you squirt the bottle under water?" Float corks in the water for your child to squirt at.

Place a Ping-Pong ball or cotton ball on the floor. With your child, take turns making the ball move by squeezing a turkey baster to blow air on it.

Have your child use a plant sprayer to spray plants.

With your child, wash cars, rocks or other objects outside. Provide large sponges and a bucket of water. Show your child how to squeeze the water out of the sponge.

Have your child pretend to milk a cow (or, if possible, teach her to milk a real one). Fill a plastic glove with water; poke a tiny hole in each fingertip. Hang the glove from a tree branch or clothesline. Show her how to squeeze the fingers of the glove to make water squirt into a bucket.

Have your child peel a hard-boiled egg.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Perform fine  
motor tasks.  
*(continued)*

#### **You can support your child ...**

Make homemade play dough with your child (or purchase some), and spend time squeezing, rolling, pulling and pinching the dough. To extend the activity, provide kitchen utensils such as a rolling pin, cookie cutters, plastic knives and a pizza cutter.

Help your child make peanut butter play dough. Combine and pound together 1 cup peanut butter, 1 cup light corn syrup, 1¼ cup powdered milk, and ¼ cup powdered sugar. Help your child make shapes out of the dough, and refrigerate the shapes until they are firm enough to eat.

Tie a string between two chairs. Help your child hang doll clothes, fabric swatches or lightweight toys on the line with spring-loaded clothespins.

Have your child make a picture gallery by hanging pictures on a line with spring-loaded clothespins. Your child can draw the pictures or cut them from magazines following a favorite theme such as baseball players or construction vehicles.

With your child, take turns picking up cotton balls with spring-loaded tongs and dropping the cotton balls into a container.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Use fingers  
and hands to  
accomplish  
fine motor  
tasks.

#### **Your child may ...**

Fasten buttons, zip zippers, fasten fasteners or snap snaps on clothing.

String beads, macaroni or "O"-shaped cereal.

Sort small shapes in a shape sorter.

Build with small connecting blocks.

Lace shoes or lacing cards.

Hold paper with one hand and cut with the other.

#### **You can support your child ...**

For pretend play, give your child old adult clothes (e.g., your own or some purchased from thrift stores) with buttons and snaps.

Allow plenty of time for your child to get dressed in the morning. Encourage him to button and snap his clothing by himself.

Provide doll clothes that have buttons and zippers.

With your child, string objects (e.g., beads, cereal, macaroni, buttons, spools) onto flexible materials (e.g., yarn, leather shoelaces, pipe cleaners, thin plastic tubing such as aquarium tubing).

Provide large-mesh plastic needlepoint canvas for your child. String yarn through a large plastic needle. Show your child how to weave the needle in and out of the mesh to create a design.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Use fingers  
and hands to  
accomplish  
fine motor  
tasks.

*(continued)*

**You can support your child ...**

Punch holes in the lid of a plastic container. Tie a knot at the end of a shoelace, and have your child string the lace through the holes. After the game, store the shoelace in the container. Cutouts from vinyl place mats with holes punched around the edges also make good lacing cards.

Provide blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes that your child can use to stack and build.

Provide small connector blocks or pop-beads for your child.

Put small objects (e.g., beads, yarn pieces, buttons, coins) in a large, shallow pan or plastic container, and cover them with sand or salt. Have a “treasure hunt” with your child using your hands and fingers to dig through the sand and find the objects.

Draw the outline of a sheep on a piece of paper. Have your child glue cotton balls onto the sheep.

Provide cardboard pictures or shapes for your child to draw around. Show him how to hold the cardboard with one hand and draw with the other.

Remind your child that both hands need to be in the “thumbs-up” position when cutting paper. Put a sticker on the thumb of your child’s dominant hand to serve as a reminder.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Use tools in  
a functional  
manner.

**Your child may ...**

Use paintbrushes, scissors and eating utensils.

Hold writing tools with fingers to draw or write.

Use woodworking tools with supervision (e.g., hammer, saw).

**You can support your child ...**

Pour tempera paint into small plastic containers. Cut a hole in each lid large enough to dip a paintbrush through to help your child control drips from the brush while painting.

Give your child a pair of children’s scissors and a circle cut out of a piece of yellow construction paper. Have your child cut a fringe around the circle to make a sun.

Provide a variety of items (e.g., drinking straws, play dough or clay, used envelopes, “junk” mail, fruit and vegetable peels) for your child to cut.

Sit with your child and color. Not only will you encourage your child to use crayons, but you’ll relieve your own stress, too.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Use tools in  
a functional  
manner.

*(continued)*

**You can support your child ...**

Children develop fine motor strength best when they work on a vertical surface so that the wrist is bent back. Tape a large piece of paper onto a wall. For drawing, provide markers or crayons, and for painting, provide paint, paintbrushes, sponges, cotton balls, cotton swabs, corks, combs and toothbrushes.

Paint the lower part of a wall in your home with chalkboard paint. Provide colored chalk and erasers.

Eat with your child, and serve foods that require the use of utensils (e.g., applesauce, mashed potatoes, cottage cheese, pudding).

Have a tea party that includes a snack that requires the use of eating utensils.

Help your child pound nails into a board.

Help your child create simple woodworking projects that involve using a hammer and saw (e.g., a bird feeder, a doll bed).

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Exhibit  
coordination  
of facial  
muscles.

**Your child may ...**

Attempt to wink an eye.

Blow bubbles through a bubble wand or blow out candles.

Try to whistle.

Imitate or make silly faces.

Speak clearly.

**You can support your child ...**

Show your child how to wink an eye. Practice together.

Have your child blow into a plastic horn or into a bowl of water through a straw.

Make a bubble solution of ½ cup water, ¼ cup liquid soap and 1 tablespoon glycerin (available at pharmacies). Provide a variety of objects (e.g., drinking straw; empty frozen juice can with both ends and any sharp edges removed; a pipe cleaner or wire bent into an enclosed shape) for your child to use to blow bubbles.

Help your child find a variety of small household items that will float (e.g., small cup, Ping-Pong ball, toy boat, cork). Have her place them in a tub of water and try to move the objects across the surface by blowing on them with a straw.

Have your child blow through a whistle then try to whistle on her own.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Exhibit  
coordination  
of facial  
muscles.**

*(continued)*

**You can support your child ...**

Have your child suck on a frozen Popsicle.

With your child, make silly faces into a mirror and try to make each other laugh. Take pictures of your funny faces. Have your child copy the faces that you make by moving her mouth and facial muscles into different positions.

Show your child how to pucker up and suck in her cheeks to make a "fish face."

Lightly move your finger around the outside of your child's mouth. Have her put her tongue where you have touched.

Articulate words clearly when you talk to your child. If you suspect your child has a speech problem, contact your health provider or a speech therapist as soon as possible.

Bend down to your child's level when you speak so he can see how your mouth, teeth and tongue form words.

Engage your child in various word-play activities such as short tongue twisters or repetitive silly nonsense words (e.g., say "picky, packy, pokey" or "bibbity, bobbity, boo").



**Pre-K  
Physical Development  
Standards (Goals)**

**Standard (Goal):**

***Responds to sensory input  
to function  
in the environment.***

Sensory input is the information your child receives through his senses. These messages flow into his spinal cord and brain. To make coordinated movements, your child uses sensory input, both about his surroundings and about his body's position and movements, to guide his motions.

Sensory awareness is the ability to give meaning to sensory input. The more experience your child has in using his senses, the better he will understand the many messages he receives through them. Body awareness is the ability to know the names of various body parts and to understand how they are used and how they relate to other body parts.

Spatial awareness is your child's understanding of the space around his body and his ability to move in and through that space. Temporal awareness is the ability to understand and predict time relationships. Temporal awareness includes your child's ability to predict when and where a thrown ball will arrive and to coordinate his movements to catch or bat it. It also includes your child's ability to coordinate various body parts in time to a beat.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Exhibit  
sensory  
awareness.**

**Your child may ...**

**Touch**

Identify hidden objects in a "feely" bag by touch.

Participate in messy play activities (e.g., finger painting, working with clay or Play-Doh).

**Hearing**

Follow verbal directions while playing games such as Simon Says.

Respond to environmental sounds (e.g., attend when name is called, investigate unusual noises such as a siren or breaking glass).

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Exhibit  
sensory  
awareness.  
(continued)

**Your child may ...**

**Sight**

Find details in illustrations in books (e.g., *I Spy*, *Each Peach Pear Plum*, *Where's Waldo?*).

Arrange objects by color, size, texture and/or shape.

Aim a ball or beanbag at a target.

Follow a line with a finger or pencil.

**Smell**

Say, "This marker smells like grapes."

Say, "I smell the popcorn."

**Taste**

Lick ice cream on a cone.

Remark that a food tastes good.

**You can support your child ...**

Cut the bottoms out of two empty, square tissue boxes, and tape the open ends together. Hide objects of various textures (e.g., cotton ball, rock, sticky tape, sandpaper) inside the box. Have your child use both hands to touch the objects and figure out what's inside.

Give your child opportunities to feel mushy, slimy and messy substances. Cut armholes in a large, plastic trash bag to make a smock. Old vinyl tablecloths or shower curtains can help protect floors or tables. Join your child in finger painting (mix the paint with sand for variety), sand and water play, cooking and other messy activities.

Give your child frequent massages, back rubs and hugs.

Have your child guess what's in a bowl while her eyes are closed or blindfolded. Vary the texture, size, weight and temperature of the object (e.g., cold, cooked spaghetti; a balloon filled with warm water and tied at the end; a hammer; feathers; dried oatmeal; wet sand; packaging peanuts; flour; sugar).

Draw with chalk on an old piece of carpet. Tell your child to erase the chalk with her hands.

Play a game of Tapping Tunes with your child. Clap your hands or tap a pencil against a hard surface to the beat of familiar songs.

Play a game of Find the Lion. Tell your child to close her eyes. Move a short distance away, and roar like a lion. Tell your child to point to the lion then open her eyes and see if she has correctly guessed your location. Take turns being the lion.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

Exhibit  
sensory  
awareness.  
(continued)

**You can support your child ...**

Have your child sit on a chair near a door. Step into the next room, and make a familiar sound (e.g., sharpen a pencil, tear paper, pour water, clap your hands, ring a bell, turn pages in a book, knock on a door). Have your child guess what you are doing by listening. Take turns making sounds.

Ask your child to find small details in pictures while reading a story or looking at photographs.

While your child is watching, lay out a set of three to five objects (e.g., ball, doll, car, pencil) in a particular order or shape arrangement (e.g., all in a circle or square). Mix up the objects, and see if your child can put them in the original order or shape.

Glue strips of Velcro on Ping-Pong balls and on a piece of poster board. With your child, take turns tossing the balls at the poster board to try and make them stick.

Draw a road with several curves in it. Tell your child to pretend her finger is a race car, and see how fast she can run her finger along the road.

Have your child go on a treasure hunt either inside or outside your home. Give her a small bag, and tell her to find specific small items (e.g., pennies, plastic dinosaurs, peanuts) to put in it.

Encourage your child to sniff flowers, perfume, spices, candles and other scented materials around the house.

Provide scented markers and scratch-and-sniff books. Make your own scratch-and-sniff paint by mixing 1 tablespoon of powdered, unsweetened drink mix (e.g., Kool-Aid) and 1 tablespoon of warm water and pouring it into a muffin tin. Using a variety of drink mix flavors, repeat for each color. Paint with a brush or sponge. Allow the resulting artwork to dry overnight before scratching and sniffing.

Find several objects that your child might recognize from their scent (e.g., orange slices, perfume, evergreen needles, peppermint candy, peanut butter, licorice). Put a small amount of each object into an empty plastic film canister, and put the remaining portions on a table. Prick a pinhole into the lid of each canister. Have your child sniff each canister and point to the matching object.

Provide a variety of foods at mealtime. Talk about how foods taste (e.g., say, "This popcorn is salty," "The candy tastes sweet," "This tastes like peanut butter," or "This tastes like Grandma's spaghetti."). Discuss food textures, too (e.g., pretzels and apples are crunchy, pancakes are soft, applesauce and mashed potatoes are mushy).

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Exhibit body  
awareness.**

**Your child may ...**

Identify body parts through finger plays and songs (e.g., *Hokey Pokey*; *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*; *Where Is Thumbkin?*).

Create different shapes with his body (e.g., make a circle with fingers, make a bridge with another child).

Imitate animals with movement of body parts (e.g., use arms for wings, slither like a snake).

**You can support your child ...**

Play games and sing songs with your child that involve using body parts (e.g., say, "Simon says put your hands on your hips," or "Simon says wiggle your shoulders and arms.>").

Draw around your child's body. Have him point to various parts as you name them. Once your child learns the more common parts (e.g., hands, feet, fingers, toes, legs, arms, head), talk about less common ones (e.g., elbow, knee, ankle, wrist, thumb, waist).

Cut out a picture of a person from a magazine. Help your child cut it into three or four pieces, then see if he can put it back together like a puzzle. Take a piece away, then ask him to name the parts of the body that are missing.

Draw a letter ("I," "T," "Y" and "C" are good ones to start with) or shape on a piece of paper, and have your child trace it with a finger. Tell your child to form the letter or shape with his body. He may have to lie on the floor to do it. Partner with your child to form an "O" or other shape.

Have your child pretend to do activities such as drinking a glass of water, shaking hands with someone or petting a dog.

On a sunny day, go outside and see how many different shadows you and your child can make by moving parts of your bodies.

With your child, cut out pictures of animals from magazines (or download them off the Internet) and glue them onto index cards. Stack the cards upside down, then take turns choosing a card and pretending to be that animal.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Exhibit  
spatial  
awareness.**

**Your child may ...**

Move her body forward, backward, sideways, up, down.

Play games involving movement and directions (e.g., Duck, Duck, Goose; Tag; Hide and Seek; Mother, May I?).

Move through a room without bumping into people or furniture.

Negotiate an obstacle course.

Put puzzles together or fit blocks into a defined space.

**You can support your child ...**

Play games such as Tag; Mother, May I?; and Hide and Seek. Emphasize running in specific directions or changing directions.

Have your child face you and repeat your actions as though looking into a mirror.

Play a game of pretend baseball. Give your child instructions (e.g., say, "Pretend to bat at a ball," "Pretend to catch a ball thrown over your head," or "Pretend to chase a ball rolling along the ground.>").

Have your child pretend to be a shopping cart, and you pretend to be the customer. Put your hands on your child's shoulders or waist and direct the starting, stopping and turning movements of the "cart" using only your hands. Take turns being the cart.

Tell your child to turn toward a place or object in the environment (e.g., the front yard, window, kitchen, sofa). Take turns giving each other verbal directions. For additional challenges, make the direction more complex (e.g., say, "Turn toward the bedroom and walk forward. Stop. Go. Walk backward.>").

Stand about 10 feet away from your child. When you say "Go," change places without touching each other. Add body positions (e.g., walking with hands on head, hands on hips, arms out).

Create an outdoor obstacle course using large cardboard boxes, lawn chairs, a water hose, etc. Have your child negotiate the course by walking, running and crawling in, over or through the spaces. Create a path that she can ride through with a tricycle or other riding toy.

Provide simple jigsaw puzzles for your child. You can purchase them or make them from old vinyl place mats, cereal boxes, used gift cards or magazine pictures.

Provide blocks that fit snugly into a box. Dump them out, then have your child put them back into the box.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Exhibit  
temporal  
awareness.**

**Your child may ...**

Move his body to a rhythm (e.g., clap, stomp, sway, march).

Adjust body movements to the tempo (e.g., fast, slow, start, stop).

Kick a rolling ball.

Catch a ball.

Follow a sequence or pattern in songs or finger plays (e.g., *B-I-N-G-O*; *The Itsy, Bitsy Spider*; *Where Is Thumbkin?*).

**You can support your child ...**

With your child, play or sing rhymes and songs that have a steady beat. Have your child stand in front of you so you can tap out the beat on her shoulders while singing the song. Sit cross-legged on the floor with your child, and tap out the beat on her knees. Have her try it on your knees. Tap out the beat together, too.

With your child, make “instruments” that can be used to create a beat (e.g., empty paper towel holders stuffed with newspaper for drumsticks; small, empty plastic containers filled with dried rice or beans for shakers; rubber bands stretched across a box for a banjo). Play along to the beat of songs or rhymes.

Have a parade with your child. Play music, and march and clap your hands to the music. Speed up or slow down as the rhythm of the songs change. Stop when the music stops.

With your child, take turns kicking a soft ball (e.g., a beach ball or playground ball). Have your child kick as hard as possible at first to build her strength, then have her begin kicking at a large target to improve her aim.

Roll or kick a ball toward your child. Have your child kick it back to you while it is still rolling.

Stand 2 or 3 feet away from your child. Bounce a large, soft ball (e.g., a beach ball or playground ball) so that your child can catch it without having to move from that spot. Have your child bounce it back to you. Younger children, or those with little experience, tend to catch a ball by clasping it to their chests with their arms. With practice and maturity, they progress to using only their hands.

With your child, sing songs or recite poems or finger plays (e.g., *B-I-N-G-O*, *Five Little Monkeys*, *Old MacDonald Had a Farm*) that have a repeating pattern. Check your local library, bookstore or the Internet for ideas.



## Pre-K Health Standards (Goals)

**Standard (Goal):**

***Practices healthy behaviors.***

Your child learns health-promoting behaviors and routines throughout her early years. In addition to the suggestions listed below, you can support her by providing sufficient and consistent rest and sleep times, nutritious foods, and regular physical and dental examinations. She learns by watching you and other adults. If your child sees the adults around her practicing healthy behaviors, she will be more likely to develop these habits herself.

**Look for  
your  
child to ...**

**Show  
independence  
in personal  
hygiene.**

**Your child may ...**

Manage toileting.

Wash and dry her hands.

Cover her nose and mouth when sneezing.

Use a tissue.

**You can support your child ...**

Establish a toileting routine where your child uses the toilet at set times during the day (e.g., first thing in the morning, after meals, before bedtime).

If your child has a toileting accident, avoid criticism and punishment. Instead, have him change his clothes and rinse out the soiled ones. Give your child motivation to keep his clothes clean (e.g., tell him he needs to have clean clothes on if he wants to go outside, play a game, hear a story, go to a friend's house, etc.).

Provide clothes for your child that are easy to take off and put on.

Encourage your child to wash and dry his hands. If he cannot reach the faucet, either hold him up or put a sturdy stool by the sink. Keep soap and towels within easy reach.

Show your child how to brush his teeth, and create a routine where he brushes after meals and before bedtime. Make sure your child uses no more than a pea-sized amount of toothpaste on the brush and that he spits out the excess after brushing.

<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Show independence in personal hygiene.</p> <p><i>(continued)</i></p>	<p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Create a routine of washing hands before meals.</p> <p>Remind your child to cover his nose and mouth when sneezing and to use a tissue. You might want to teach him to sneeze and cough into the inside of his arm rather than his hands to help prevent the spread of germs.</p> <p>Each day, give your child a tissue or handkerchief to keep in his pocket, and remind him to use it when he needs it.</p> <p>During pretend play, suggest that your child wipe a doll or stuffed animal's nose.</p> <p>Read books that discuss toileting and other healthy behaviors such as washing hands and using a tissue.</p>
<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Choose to participate in daily physical activity.</p>	<p><b>Your child may ...</b></p> <p>Play on/with outdoor equipment (e.g., slides, balls, wheeled toys).</p> <p>Engage in active play (e.g., run, jump, chase, move to music, play with pets).</p> <p>Go on walks with family members.</p> <p>Join in indoor or outdoor games (e.g., musical games, Tag, Drop the Handkerchief).</p> <p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Create a schedule for your child that includes at least one hour of physical activity each day.</p> <p>Take your child to playgrounds frequently, and if possible, provide outdoor play equipment and riding toys in your yard. Don't just cheer on your child from the sidelines — be a good role model and join in the fun.</p> <p>With your child, play Tag and other games that involve running and movement.</p> <p>Play music, and dance with your child. Use scarves and streamers for extra fun.</p> <p>Take walks with your child. Walk in different ways (e.g., take tiny steps, take giant steps, walk very fast, walk slow like a turtle).</p> <p>If it's hot outside, play games involving water (e.g., play catch with water balloons, run through a sprinkler, "paint" yourselves with a bucket of water and a large paintbrush).</p> <p>If there is snow on the ground, go sledding or ice skating, play catch with snowballs, or build a snowman or igloo.</p>

<p><b>Look for your child to ...</b></p> <p>Exhibit body strength and endurance.</p>	<p><b>Your child may ...</b></p> <p>Climb a ladder on the slide.</p> <p>Pour liquid from a small pitcher.</p> <p>Maintain her hold while hanging from a bar.</p> <p>Engage in activities such as duck walks, crab walks, frog leaps, bear walks or wheelbarrow walks.</p>
	<p><b>You can support your child ...</b></p> <p>Visit playgrounds regularly with your child. Get involved in the activities as much as possible. If she's comfortable with it, encourage her to climb the ladder and go down the slide. Help her hang by her hands and arms from a bar.</p> <p>Provide a small pitcher of ice water, juice or milk for your child to pour at meal times.</p> <p>Play tea party with your child with weak tea or colored water in a small pitcher.</p> <p>Have your child sit on a chair and lift a bucket with her legs to move it from one spot to another.</p> <p>Stuff a laundry bag with newspaper or old clothes, and hang it from the ceiling for your child to use as a punching bag.</p> <p>Have your child lie on her stomach on the floor. Lift up her legs (supporting them at the thigh initially) so she can walk on her hands like a wheelbarrow.</p> <p>Have your child sit on the floor and lean back on her hands. Tell her or show her how to bend her knees while keeping her feet flat on the floor. Have her lift her buttocks up off the floor and walk like a crab.</p> <p>Have your child squat down on her heels and try to walk like a duck.</p>



## Pre-K Safety Standards (Goals)

### Standard (Goal):

#### **Practices safe behaviors.**

Young children learn safety rules gradually. It is the responsibility of the adults in their lives to provide a safe environment and to monitor their activities. Install smoke alarms and check them annually (e.g., in April or October when daylight savings time

begins or ends), keep dangerous products locked up, talk about who is a stranger and who is not, and provide appropriate vehicle restraints.

If you own firearms, keep them locked up at all times where your child cannot get to them, and lock and store your ammunition separately. Put trigger locks on all of your firearms. Studies show that even 3-year-old children have enough strength to pull the trigger of a handgun.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Listen to and follow adult directions during emergencies.

#### **Your child may ...**

Participate in emergency drills (e.g., fire, intruders, natural disasters) at school and home.

#### **You can support your child ...**

Talk to your child about the reasons for and the importance of safety rules. Repeat safety rules frequently so your child learns and remembers them.

Talk with your child about what to do in case of an emergency. Practice your plan by sounding the smoke alarm and following your escape routes to an outside meeting place. Tell your child that if there is thick smoke in the air, it is better to crawl than walk because smoke rises.

Teach your child that while his first response should be to get away from flames as quickly as possible, if his clothing is on fire he should use the technique of "Stop, Drop (immediately to the ground and cover face with hands) and Roll (over and over)."

Reassure your child by telling him that emergencies are very unlikely to happen but that you want him to know what to do so he can be safe and not get hurt if one should happen.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Follow vehicle, street and public safety.

#### **Your child may ...**

Use appropriate car restraints.

Stay with an adult when crossing the street, in parking lots and/or in public places.

Practice bike safety (e.g., wear a helmet, ride in a safe place).

Stay away from machinery (e.g., lawn mower, power tools, farm equipment).

#### **You can support your child ...**

Be sure you and your child always wear appropriate vehicle safety restraints (**Note:** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children who weigh less than 40 lbs. use a car safety seat with a full harness. Larger children should use a booster seat in combination with the vehicle's lap/shoulder belt.) If your child refuses to stay buckled, calmly pull off the road and refuse to move until her seat belt is buckled. Remain firm; auto accidents are the leading cause of death in children.

Talk to your child about the importance of staying with an adult when crossing the street or in public places. Hold your child's hand when you are crossing streets or in crowded places.

Monitor your child's whereabouts at all times, and make sure she knows that it is important that you know where she is. Teach your child her full name, address, phone number and how to call 9-1-1. It's often easier for children to remember lists of numbers when they are put to music (e.g., sing your phone number to the tune of *Merrily We Roll Along*).

Teach your child how to identify and go to a store clerk for help if lost or separated from you in a store.

Have your child wear a helmet when riding a tricycle or bicycle or when using roller skates or rollerblades. Model the behavior yourself. Helmets should be worn flat on the head rather than tilted back at an angle.

Talk to your child about the dangers of using lawn and farm equipment and other machinery, and tell her to avoid touching them. If you live on a farm, provide a supervised play area (preferably fenced) for your child away from livestock, grain storage, farm buildings and machinery.

#### **Look for your child to ...**

Recognize personal danger.

#### **Your child may ...**

Know that objects such as weapons, syringes, matches, etc., can be dangerous and should not be touched.

Display caution around water, fire, unsafe heights and unfamiliar people or animals.

Know not to eat unknown substances such as medicines, poisons, household cleaners, etc.

<b>Look for your child to ...</b>  Recognize personal danger.  <i>(continued)</i>	<b>You can support your child ...</b>  Teach your child never to touch guns and to tell an adult if he finds one. Talk with your child frequently about the dangers of firearms and the difference between real guns and toy guns.  Tell your child that lighters and matches are tools for grown-ups rather than toys for children. Teach your child to tell a grown-up if he finds matches and lighters, and tell him not to touch them.  Tell your child that needles and syringes such as those at health providers' offices can contain harmful germs and should not be touched.  Talk with your child about the dangers posed by water, fire, heights, and unfamiliar people and animals. Point out that even if other children are taking risks, your child should not follow.  Tell your child not to put things in his mouth, especially potentially harmful materials such as medicines, detergents and household cleaners. Obtain "Mr. Yuck" stickers from your local poison control center, and teach your child to avoid touching anything with the sticker on it. Keep the poison control number by your phone.
<b>Look for your child to ...</b>  Know how and when to seek help.	<b>Your child may ...</b>  Ask an adult for help when made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe by another person.  Call for help during emergencies (e.g., shout for an adult, ask an adult for help in an emergency, call 9-1-1).  Recognize trusted adults (e.g., police officers, firefighters).  <b>You can support your child ...</b>  Give your child opportunities to be around adults. Encourage your child to talk to adults (e.g., say, "Tell Mrs. Johnson what we did this morning."). If your child is comfortable talking to adults, he will be more likely to ask for help when he needs it.  Tell your child where to seek help or directions in various situations (e.g., a neighbor, store clerk, teacher, parent or other trusted adult).  Talk with your child about what to do in emergencies. Teach your child to dial 9-1-1.  Take your child on "field trips" to your local police and fire stations, and encourage him to ask the officers and firefighters about their jobs. To help your child recognize them, point out firefighters and police officers when you see them out in the community.  Read books about community helpers, and talk with your child about what they do.

## Tips for Parents

You play a large role in your child's physical development and in her health and safety education. These suggestions can help you guide her growth.

- Provide daily opportunities for your child to play actively outdoors. Be sure to dress your child properly for the weather.
- Join your child in physical activities and games — don't just watch from the sidelines.
- Encourage your child to learn and practice new movement skills. Show her how to do them. Give her many opportunities to practice new skills.
- Avoid putting your child in movement activities that emphasize competition over enthusiasm. You want your child to learn that moving her body is fun and good for her. Criticism and negative comparisons with others will reduce her motivation to participate.
- Read books and sing songs to your child that encourage physical activity and movement.
- Turn off the TV, and play some lively music to get you and your child moving.
- Go for frequent walks outdoors with your child.
- Set aside a place in your home for your child to get creative. Provide crayons, pens, pencils, markers, chalk and paint as well as many different types of paper for drawing. Sit with your child and color.
- Provide many opportunities for cutting, lacing, manipulating play dough and messy play activities.
- Be a good model for your child. Exercise regularly, eat a balanced diet, get plenty of rest, and tell your child why these things are beneficial.
- Provide nutritious foods for your child as well as sufficient rest and relaxation periods.
- Take your child for regular well-child and dental examinations.
- Take your child for developmental, vision and hearing screenings.
- Provide a safe home environment for your child. Teach your child what to do in case of an emergency.

## Resources for Parents – Books

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- Stinson, S. (1988). *Dance for young children: Finding the magic in movement*. Reston, VA: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.
- Torbert, M., and Schneider, L.B. (1992). *Follow me too: A handbook of movement activities for three- to five-year-olds*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley/Pearson.
- Weikart, P.S. (2002). *Movement in Steady Beat: Activities for Children Ages 3 to 7*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.
- Weikart, P.S. (1997). *Movement plus rhymes, songs, and singing games. Activities for young children*. 2nd edition. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

## Resources for Parents – Links

- American Academy of Pediatrics — [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance — [www.aahperd.org](http://www.aahperd.org)
- American Association of Poison Control Centers — [www.aapcc.org](http://www.aapcc.org)
- The American Association for the Child's Right to Play — [www.ipausa.org](http://www.ipausa.org)
- American Cancer Society — [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)
- American Heart Association — [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- Dole 5 A Day — [www.dole5aday.com](http://www.dole5aday.com)
- The Nemours Foundation KidsHealth — [kidshealth.org](http://kidshealth.org)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children — [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)
- National Dairy Council — [www.nationaldairycouncil.org](http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org)
- National Head Start Association — [www.nhsa.org](http://www.nhsa.org)
- National Institutes of Health — [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration — [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)
- National Program for Playground Safety — [www.uni.edu/playground/home.html](http://www.uni.edu/playground/home.html)
- National Safety Council — [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)
- Nutrition Navigator: A Rating Guide to Nutrition Websites — [www.navigator.tufts.edu/family/among\\_the\\_best.html](http://www.navigator.tufts.edu/family/among_the_best.html)
- PE Central: The Premier Web Site for Health and Physical Educators — [pecentral.com](http://pecentral.com)
- Parents as Teachers National Center — [www.patnc.org](http://www.patnc.org)
- The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports — [www.fitness.gov](http://www.fitness.gov)
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission "Kidd Safety" — [www.cpsc.gov/kids/kidsafety/](http://www.cpsc.gov/kids/kidsafety/)
- USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine — [www.bcm.tmc.edu/cnrc/](http://www.bcm.tmc.edu/cnrc/)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services — [www.os.dhhs.gov](http://www.os.dhhs.gov)
- University of Illinois Early Childhood and Parenting (ECAP) Collaborative — [ecap.crc.uiuc.edu](http://ecap.crc.uiuc.edu)

## Resources for Children – Books

**Physical Development:** *A Picture Book of Jesse Owens* — David A. Adler and Robert Casilla; *Each Peach Pear Plum* — Allan Ahlberg and Janet Ahlberg; *My Five Senses* — Alike; *My Hands* — Alike; *Barn Dance* — John Archambault, Ted Rand and Bill Martin Jr.; *Here Are My Hands* — John Archambault, Ted Rand and Bill Martin Jr.; *Moondance* — Frank Asch; *Clifford's Sports Day* — Norman Bridwell; *Hand Rhymes* — Marc Tolon Brown; *Making Faces* — Nick Butterworth; *From Head to Toe* — Eric Carle; *The Very Quiet Cricket* — Eric Carle; *Clap Your Hands* — Lorinda Bryan Cauley; *Parade* — Donald Crews; *Snow Dance* — Lezlie Evans and Cynthia Jabar; *Where's Waldo?* — Martin Handford and Martin Hanford; *Is it Rough? Is it Smooth? Is it Shiny?* — Tana Hoban; *Color Dance* — Ann Jonas; *The Lot at the End of My Block* — Kevin Lewis and Reg Cartwright; *Rhinos Who Play Baseball* — Julie Mammano; *This Is My Body* — Gina Mayer and Mercer Mayer; *Five Little Monkeys* — David Melling; *Clang, Boom, Bang* — Jane Belk Moncure and Viki Woodworth; *Benny's Big Bubble* — Jane O'Connor and Tomie dePaola; *Bearobics: A Hip-Hop Counting Story* — Victoria Parker, Emily Bolam and Vic Parker; *The Ear Book* — Al Perkins, Dr. Seuss and Bill O'Brian; *Shake My Sillies Out* — Raffi and David Allender; *What Noises Can You Hear?* — Hannah Reidy and Emma Dodd; *Morgan Plays Soccer* — Anne Rockwell and Paul Meisel; *The Body Book* — Shelly Rotner and Steve Calcagnino; *Jump Rope Magic* — Afi-Odelia Scruggs and David Diaz; *The Eye Book* — Dr. Seuss, Theo. Lesieg and Joseph Mathieu; *The Itsy Bitsy Spider* — Iza Trapani; *The Farmer in the Dell* — Alexandra Wallner; *Hop Jump* — Ellen Stoll Walsh; *Can You See What I See?* — Walter Wick; *Piggies* — Audrey Wood and Don Wood.

**Health:** *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* — Eric Carle and Leiggi; *Jamerry* — Bruce Degen; *Bread and Jam for Frances* — Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban; *The Checkup* — Helen Oxenbury; *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* — Mitchell Sharmat, Ariane Dewey and Jose Aruego.

**Safety:** *I'm Safe! At the Mall* — Wendy Gordon and Paul Gordon; *Dinosaurs Beware: A Safety Guide* — Stephen Marc and Krensky Brown; *Fireman Small* — Wong Herbert Yee.

# Physical Development Materials

Your child gains physical development knowledge from observing and acting on objects he sees around the house and outdoors every day. Here are some items you might want to have available for your child to encourage learning.

- Lightweight rubber, foam, plastic and yarn balls in a variety of sizes
- Plastic or foam bat
- Beanbags (homemade or purchased)
- Foam bowling pins (or 2-liter plastic bottles)
- Large cardboard boxes with shapes cut in the sides to crawl through
- Plastic hoops
- Punching balloons
- Ribbon sticks for creative movement
- Carpet squares to turn upside down and “skate” on over a smooth floor
- Narrow piece of wood about 4 inches wide, 4 inches high, and several feet long to place on the floor and use as a balance beam
- Foam hockey sticks with 24-inch handles
- Tricycles and other riding toys with pedals
- Swing set with ladder
- Crayons, large and small pencils, chalk, felt-tip and ballpoint pens, paintbrushes, blunt-tip scissors, and nontoxic markers; paper in various sizes and colors, index cards, notepaper, spiral-bound pads, and cardboard
- Things to string such as spools, beads, “O”-shaped cereal and macaroni
- Blocks of various sizes and shapes
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Play dough (homemade or purchased)
- Objects to sort such as buttons, rocks, ribbons and coins (with supervision to protect against choking)

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